

**Lowell Business Managers Look At
The City of Lowell**

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Prepared for:

**The City of Lowell
Department of Planning and Development**

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Introduction

This summary report is based on interviews with 51 owners or managers of businesses in Lowell. The purpose of this survey was to better understand the business climate and employment opportunities in Lowell. Further, this study serves to gain a better understanding of the development needs of businesses in Lowell.

Businesses were randomly selected from a list of businesses in Lowell. Larger businesses (100 or more employees) in Lowell represent approximately 3% of the number of businesses in the City. Since these companies represent a greater portion of the total number of employees, we over-sampled this group to assure adequate representation. All companies with 100 or more employees were asked to participate, with eleven providing their opinions.

The person responsible for business operations was interviewed at each of the 51 companies that participated. Twenty of the managers we spoke to currently live in Lowell and 17 say they grew up in Lowell. For a complete description of the participants, please see Appendix A: Manager/Owner Details.

The companies that these managers represent range in size from one employee to 1,500 employees, and have operated in Lowell from one to 110 years. They represent a variety of business types including retail, service, and manufacturing. The companies are located throughout Lowell with a concentration in Centralville (13), the Highlands (12), and Pawtucketville (5). For a complete description of the businesses, please see Appendix A: Business Details and Type of Businesses.

Given small base sizes, care should be taken in using the findings and conclusions reported here.

Key Findings Summary

- Managers are very interested in maintaining the unique character of the downtown and in promoting Lowell as ‘a great place to visit.’ On average, managers feel that attracting business and investment while protecting Lowell’s unique character is more important than promoting construction through relaxed building restrictions and easier permitting.
- Managers are interested in promoting more business development in both the neighborhood business districts as well as in the downtown area.
- The availability of people for employment is one reason businesses choose to operate in Lowell. However, managers rate the availability of appropriately skilled employees as only moderately high in Lowell.
- As such, more businesses feel that promoting a stable local workforce by protecting attractive residential neighborhoods is more important than encouraging business development by permitting commercial and industrial use in more areas. Smaller businesses (10 or fewer employees) are more likely to support this view than are larger businesses.
- Overall, managers feel Lowell should continue to welcome immigrants to the community. Managers of small businesses, businesses in suburban locations, and managers of non-retail businesses are the most likely to want Lowell to continue to be a welcoming haven for immigrants.
- However, most managers feel Lowell should move away from its blue-collar roots and bring in upscale stores and services.
- Managers report that one of the ways that Lowell could most help businesses operate is by offering more financial assistance, such as by lowering taxes and fees and by providing support for grants and business loans.
- Managers feel that while the public transportation system encourages businesses to operate in Lowell, the layout and conditions of roads in Lowell, traffic congestion and parking are barriers to operating a business there.
- The level of community pride and the quality of residential life encourage businesses to operate in Lowell.
- Some managers feel the permitting process in Lowell is difficult. Some mention this as a barrier to business and a majority do not feel that Lowell’s permitting process is easier than in other cities. However, at the same time, most do not feel the ability to get permits discourages businesses to operate in Lowell.

- Managers report that the commercial tax rate in Lowell discourages businesses to operate in Lowell.
- Some managers have concerns over public safety and policing in the City and feel that negative perceptions about the crime in the City are barriers to operating a business in Lowell.

Conclusions

- The city of Lowell needs to consider preservation over unrestricted growth in the town. Preserving the unique character of the City both in the downtown area as well as in the neighborhoods is seen as a benefit to business owners.
- Transportation issues, such as the layout and condition of roads, traffic congestion, and parking should be addressed to assuage entrance/parking concerns.
- Lowell could also offer more financial assistance to businesses in terms of grant-writing assistance, small business loans, and lowering the commercial tax rate. Currently, these are seen as barriers to growth.
- Promoting Lowell's quality of residential life helps with attracting both employees and patrons. Offering programs to train employees and/or introducing currently skilled residents to hiring managers may also improve the attractiveness of Lowell to businesses.

Detailed Findings

I. Current Business Climate in Lowell

Managers were asked how well each of a series of twenty factors encourages or discourages businesses to operate in Lowell. Each factor was rated on a 10-point scale where 1 means *Strongly discourages businesses to operate in Lowell* and 10 means *Strongly encourages businesses to operate in Lowell*.

Although no factor is seen as the quintessential driver for businesses to come to Lowell, a few are seen as encouraging, namely, *Public Transportation* (7.5), *Level of Community Pride* (7.3), the *Market for Goods and Services* (7.2), and *the Ability to get Permits* (7.0). However, it does appear that two factors discourage businesses from operating in Lowell – *Commercial Tax Rates* (4.9) and *Traffic Congestion* (5.0). The remaining factors are seen as neither clear contributors nor as factors that greatly discourage businesses from operating in the City.

Businesses located in suburban* areas of the City are generally more positive about the business climate in Lowell than are businesses located in urban* areas of the City. These businesses give Lowell statistically higher scores on several factors. These factors include; *Level of community pride* (8.1 vs. 6.3), *The ability to get permits* (7.7 vs. 6.5), *Affordable office or work space* (7.4 vs. 6.2), *Quality of residential life* (7.0 vs. 5.8), and *Competition in the area* (7.3 vs. 5.6).

For details see *Table 1: The Business Climate in Lowell* in Appendix A.

*Areas in Lowell considered “Suburban” include The Highlands, Pawtucketville, Belvidere, Christian Hill, and South Lowell. “Urban” neighborhoods include Centralville, Lower Highlands, The Acre, Back Central, Lower Belvidere, and Downtown.

Motivations for Operating a Business in Lowell

Business managers were asked why they choose to operate their business in the City of Lowell. Several choose to operate their business in Lowell because there is a large population to draw on for employment.

“Good people in the area.”

“Large population base. Cosmopolitan. Diverse population.”

“Available people for employment.”

Many say they choose to operate in Lowell because they are able to find appropriate or affordable office space.

“Originally {located} in Lowell because of cheaper rent.”

“Availability of low cost office space.”

“Extremely affordable office space.”

“{I} found the size of property needed.”

Others choose Lowell because of the geographic location.

“Close to home.”

“Convenient.”

“Location to Boston and New Hampshire.”

Other reasons for choosing Lowell include;

- Stimulating environment
- Presence of converted textile mills is a plus
- Downtown setting for businesses
- Proud community
- Fantastic/unique city

Barriers to Operating a Business in Lowell

While some managers feel there are no barriers to owning or operating a business in Lowell (20%), others suggest that some aspects of Lowell make it difficult to operate a business in the City.

Several managers mention traffic or parking issues as one barrier.

"Parking is an issue, especially near residential areas. It's hard to get the neighbors not to park in customers' spots."

"Parking improvements would be nice."

"Congestion with traffic around bridges."

"Traffic congestion getting through city from the connector."

Managers are also concerned with the process of getting permits from the City.

"City Hall. Politics. Red Tape."

"Applying for licenses."

"Permits and zoning."

Other barriers mentioned include;

- Finding appropriate space
- Negative perceptions of the City
- Distance from airport
- Crime
- Difficulty in getting here

II. Business Development in Lowell

The Future Direction of Lowell

Managers almost unilaterally agree that *Promoting Lowell as ‘a great place to visit’ benefits the City greatly* (98%) with three managers out of four *Strongly agreeing* with this statement (76%). They also agree that *The unique character of Lowell’s downtown is important to maintain* (98%) with more than half saying they *Strongly agree* with this statement (59%).

More managers agree that *The future of Lowell rests with bringing upscale stores and services to town* (84%) than agree that *Lowell should remain a blue-collar town* (63%).

Retail businesses are more likely to agree with both of these statements than are other types of businesses.

	Total Who Agree %	Retail %	Service %	Other %
Base:	(51)	(17)	(25)	(9)
The future of Lowell rests with bringing upscale stores and services to town.	84	100	80	66
Lowell should remain a blue-collar town	63	89	48	55

Significant at the 95% confidence level.

Many managers agree that *Lowell should continue to welcome immigrants to the community* (78%).

- Smaller businesses are more likely to want to continue welcoming immigrants than are larger businesses (90% vs. 62%).
- Retail businesses are less likely to want the City to continue welcoming immigrants than other types of businesses (58% retail, 88% service, and 89% other types).
- Businesses that operate in a suburban location are more likely to say they agree strongly that Lowell should continue to welcome immigrants to the community than are businesses in urban locations (56% vs. 26%).

<i>Lowell should continue to welcome immigrants to the community.</i>	Total Who Agree %	Suburban %	Urban %
Base:	(51)	(25)	(23)
<u>Agree</u>	<u>78</u>	<u>88*</u>	<u>69</u>
Agree somewhat	37	32	43
Agree strongly	41	56	26

Significant at the 95% confidence level.

* Significant at the 90% confidence level.

Nearly as many feel that *Lowell's regulations and permitting processes make it easy to do business in the City* (69%).

For details, see *Table 2: The Future Direction of Lowell* in Appendix A.

Managers were asked to choose how they think Lowell should spend its resources on certain issues by dividing a total of ten points between two issues. The points could be allocated in any way to the pair as long as the total equaled ten. More points were assigned to the issue they feel is more important for the City to focus on.

Managers are divided on the issue of *Promoting a local workforce by protecting attractive residential neighborhoods* versus *Encouraging business development by permitting commercial and industrial uses in more areas*. However, slightly more points were assigned to *Promoting a local workforce by protecting attractive residential neighborhoods* (5.4 vs. 4.6). This division may be due to differing interest among small and large businesses. Since small businesses often thrive in residential neighborhoods, it is not surprising that they are more concerned that Lowell spends resources to *Protect residential neighborhoods* than are large businesses (5.9 vs. 4.6).

	Average Points Assigned	Businesses with 10 employees or fewer	Businesses with More than 10 employees
Base:	(51)	(30)	(21)
Promote a stable local workforce by protecting attractive residential neighborhoods	5.4*	5.9	4.6
Encourage business development by permitting commercial and industrial uses in more areas	4.6	4.1	5.4

Significant at the 95% confidence level.

Managers are interested in protecting Lowell's unique character. Although managers feel *Promoting construction through relaxed building restrictions and easier permitting* (4.2) is important, overall more points were assigned to *Attracting business and investment through protection of Lowell's unique character* (5.8). While only directionally significant (significant at the 89% confidence level), there does appear to be a difference by type of business. Retail businesses are less likely to support the protection of Lowell's unique character than are other business types (5.0 retail vs. 6.3 service, and 6.0 other) and more likely to support relaxed building restrictions and easier permitting (5.0 vs. 3.7 vs. 4.0).

	Average Points Assigned	Retail	Service	Other
Base:	(51)	(17)	(25)	(9)
Attract business and investment through protection of Lowell's unique character	5.8	5.0	6.3	6.0
Promote construction through relaxed building restrictions and easier permitting	4.2	5.0	3.7	4.0

Managers are interested in both *Promoting more business development in the neighborhood business districts* (5.3) as well as *Promoting more business development in the downtown area* (4.7). However, slightly more importance was assigned to development in the neighborhood business districts.

- Businesses that have operated in Lowell for more than ten years are more interested in business development in the downtown area (5.3) than in the neighborhood districts (4.7).
- While only directionally significant (significant at the 85% confidence level), there appears to be a difference between small and large companies. Larger companies are more likely to support development in the downtown area (5.3) while smaller businesses are more likely to support promoting more business in the neighborhood districts (5.6).

	Average Points Assigned	10 or less years	Greater than 10 years	Businesses with 10 employs. or fewer	Businesses with more than 10 employs.
Base:	(51)	(24)	(27)	(30)	(21)
Promote more business development in the neighborhood business districts	5.3	5.9	4.7	5.6	4.7
Promote more business development in the downtown area	4.7	4.1	5.3	4.4	5.3

Significant at the 95% confidence level.

How the City Can Help Businesses Operate in Lowell

When asked, managers offer many suggestions on how the City could help them operate their business in Lowell. Several managers suggest more help financially in terms of lower taxes/fees or in providing grants or loans to businesses.

"Water rates could be lower."

"Lowering water and sewage bills. Or giving us a break on these two (fees)."

"Reduce taxes."

"Give more grants."

"{Provide} small business loans."

Several managers mention providing more efforts in terms of public safety.

"...control crime."

"More police patrolling."

Other suggestions include:

- Offer more workforce training
- Provide more parking
- Reduce red tape in permitting process
- Create collaborative partnerships between hospitals and police departments
- Make landlords take care of properties
- Promote the City as a friendly place to live
- Make the downtown area a top priority

Methodology

This summary report is based on interviews with 51 owners or managers of businesses in Lowell. The purpose of this survey was to better understand the business climate and employment opportunities in Lowell. Further, this study serves to gain a better understanding of the development needs of businesses in Lowell.

Businesses were randomly selected from a list of businesses in Lowell that was purchased from Olympia, Inc. Larger businesses (100 or more employees) in Lowell represent approximately 3% of the number of businesses in the City. Since these companies represent a greater portion of the total number of employees, we over-sampled this group to assure adequate representation. All companies with 100 or more employees were asked to participate, with eleven providing their opinions.

The person responsible for business operations was interviewed by Davidson-Peterson Associates employees. All interviews were completed by telephone between February 12 and February 22, 2002. A copy of the questionnaire may be found in Appendix B.

Davidson-Peterson Associates (DPA), a division of Digital Research, Inc. (DRI) is an independent marketing research company located in Kennebunk, Maine. DPA designed the questionnaire used in this study, with review and input from Lowell's Division of Planning and Development. Davidson-Peterson Associates managed the fieldwork, and conducted the data tabulation, analysis and summary report. All procedures were conducted in accordance with accepted research standards.

A copy of the tabulated data, verbatim responses, and the questionnaire used in this study are included in the appendix to this report.

Appendix A: Supporting Tables

Table 1
The Business Climate in Lowell

	Ave. Rating	10 or less employ	Greater than 10 employ	Retail	Service	Other	Suburban	Urban
Base:	(51)	(30)	(21)	(17)	(25)	(9)	(25)	(23)
Public transportation	7.5	7.8	7.1	8.1*	7.2	7.2	7.2	7.6
Level of community pride	7.3	7.5	7.1	6.9	7.6	7.3	8.1	6.3
The market for goods and services	7.2	7.0	7.5	7.0	7.5	6.9	7.6	6.9
The ability to get permits	7.0	6.6	7.6	6.7	7.1	7.0	7.7	6.5
Affordable office or work space	6.8	6.8	6.9	5.9	7.3	7.2	7.4	6.2
Support from city government	6.8	6.6*	7.1	6.6	7.3	6.0	7.7	6.1
Availability of appropriately skilled employees	6.6	6.7	6.4	6.1	6.4	7.8*	6.8	6.7
Available office or work space	6.6	6.6	6.7	6.6	6.6	6.7	7.0	6.3
Quality of residential life	6.5	6.9	6.0	5.9	6.8	6.9	7.0	5.8
Competition in the area	6.5	6.3	6.8	6.5	6.6	6.3	7.3	5.6
Residential cost of living	6.3	6.4	6.1	6.3	6.3	6.3	6.6	5.9
Zoning ordinances	6.1	6.0	6.2	5.4	6.7*	5.8	6.5	5.8
Grants for building improvements or signs	6.1	6.1	5.9	6.1	6.1	6.0	6.5	5.9
Parking availability	5.9	5.9	5.9	5.6	5.9	6.4	5.9	5.7
Level of crime	5.9	6.1	5.6	5.4	6.2	6.0	6.6	5.0
City politics	5.8	5.8	5.6	5.6	5.9	5.6	6.3*	5.2
Layout and conditions of roads in Lowell	5.6	5.5	5.7	6.2	5.4	5.0	5.4	5.6
Tax incentives	5.5	5.9	5.0	5.7	5.4	5.7	5.9	5.4
Traffic congestion	5.0	5.4	4.5	4.6	5.2	5.3	5.3	5.0
Commercial tax rates	4.9	5.1	4.6	4.6	5.3	4.4	5.4	4.6

Note: Average rating on a 10-point scale where 1 means *Strongly discourages businesses to operate in Lowell* and 10 means *Strongly encourages businesses to operate in Lowell*.

Significant at the 95% confidence level.

* Significant at the 90% confidence level.

Table 2
The Future Direction of Lowell

	Total Who Agree % Base: (51)	10 or less employ. % (30)	Greater than 10 employ. % (21)	Retail % (17)	Service % (25)	Other % (9)	Suburban % (25)	Urban % (23)
Promoting Lowell as “a great place to visit” benefits the City greatly.	98	100	96	94	100	100	100	96
The unique character of Lowell’s downtown is important to maintain.	98	100	95	94	100	100	100	95
The future of Lowell rests with bringing upscale stores and services to town.	84	87	81	100	80	66	80	77
Lowell should continue to welcome immigrants to the community.	78	90	62	58	88	89	88*	69
Compared with other cities and towns in the area, Lowell’s regulations and permitting processes make it easy to do business in this City.	69	70	66	77	72	44	60	78
Lowell should remain a blue-collar town.	63	67	57	89	48	55	56	66

Note: This table represents the percent of managers who say they *Agree strongly* or *Agree somewhat* to each statement.

Note: Areas in Lowell considered “Suburban” include The Highlands, Pawtucketville, Belvidere, Christian Hill, and South Lowell. “Urban” neighborhoods include Centralville, Lower Highlands, The Acre, Back Central, Lower Belvidere, and Downtown.

Significant at the 95% confidence level.

* Significant at the 90% confidence level.

Table 3
Manager/Owner Details

Number of Participants Total = 51	
Job Title	
Manager	20
Owner/Partner/Principal	13
CEO/COO/Chairman/President	9
Vice President/Director	6
Other	3
Grew up in Lowell	
Yes	17
No	23
No Answer	11
Currently live in Lowell	
Yes	20
<u>No</u>	<u>31</u>
Not currently, but did at one time	11
Never lived in Lowell	20

Table 4
Business Details

	Number of Participants Total = 51
Company Size	
1	3
2	10
3	4
4	5
5 - 10	8
11 - 20	5
21 - 30	1
More than 30	15
Years operating in Lowell	
1 - 2	7
3 - 5	7
6 - 10	10
11 - 20	16
21 - 50	6
More than 50	5
Neighborhood	
Centralville	13
The Highlands	12
Pawtucketville	5
Belvidere	4
Downtown	4
Lower Highlands	3
South Lowell	4
The Acre	1
Back Central	1
Riverside	1
Christian Hill	--
Lower Belvidere	--
Middlesex Village	--
Sacred Heart	--
Swede Village	--
Other	1
Don't know	1
No answer	1

Table 5
Type of Business

	Number of Participants Total = 51
<u>Retail</u>	<u>17</u>
Car dealer	1
Convenient store	4
Pet store	1
Appliance store	1
Variety store	1
Drugstore	1
Grocery store	2
Paint store	1
Glass company	1
Rental company	1
Donut shop	1
Restaurant	2
<u>Services</u>	<u>25</u>
Laundry	1
Typesetting and Design	1
Shoe repair	1
Health care (hospital, medical office, Chiropractic office, etc.)	7
Landscaping	1
Auto repair	2
Day care	1
Insurance	1
Financial group/bank	3
Funeral home	1
Human services	1
Plumbing and heating	1
Environmental consultants	3
Martial arts school	1
<u>Other</u>	<u>9</u>
Communications	1
Engineering	1
Religious institution	2
Wholesale distributor	1
Manufacturing	4

Appendix B: Questionnaire

Hello, I'm _____, and am calling for Lowell's Division of Planning and Development. Today, we're doing a survey on what it's like to run a business in Lowell and we'd like to include your views. The results of this survey will help the city of Lowell develop a Master Plan and influence policy decisions.

[If transferred to another person, repeat introduction. If continuing with the same person who answered the telephone, continue below.]

[If not available or not a good time, ask for a convenient time to call back.]

1. First, let me read you several different factors that may affect the business climate in Lowell. As I read each one, please tell me whether or not you think each factor would encourage or discourage business owners from operating their business in the city of Lowell. Use a ten-point scale where “1” means **Strongly discourages businesses to operate in Lowell** and “10” means **Strongly encourages businesses to operate in Lowell**. You can use a “1,” “10,” or any number in between to indicate how important an item is to you. **[Rotate items]**

[illegible]

	Strongly Discourages	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Strongly Encourages
Public transportation	()	()	()	()	()	()	()	()	()	()
Level of community pride	()	()	()	()	()	()	()	()	()	()
Quality of residential life	()	()	()	()	()	()	()	()	()	()
Ability to get permits	()	()	()	()	()	()	()	()	()	()
Tax incentives	()	()	()	()	()	()	()	()	()	()
Grants for building improvements or signage	()	()	()	()	()	()	()	()	()	()

2. Now I am going to read statements others have made about Lowell. For each statement please tell me whether you **Agree Strongly, Agree Somewhat, Disagree Somewhat, Disagree Strongly.**

	Disagree Strongly	Disagree Somewhat	Agree Somewhat	Agree Strongly
The future of Lowell rests with bringing upscale stores and services to town.	()	()	()	()
Lowell should continue to welcome immigrants to the community.	()	()	()	()
Lowell should remain a blue-collar town.	()	()	()	()
The unique character of Lowell's downtown is important to maintain.	()	()	()	()
Promoting Lowell as "a great place to visit" benefits the City greatly.	()	()	()	()
Compared with other cities and towns in the area, Lowell's regulations and permitting processes make it easy to do business in this City.	()	()	()	()

3. A city often needs to choose how it spends its resources on issues. We would like to know how you think Lowell should choose between some issues.

For each pair of issues that I read to you, think about how important each is for the city of Lowell. You have ten points to allocate between the two issues. You can allocate any number to either one provided the total equals ten points. Give more points to the issue that you think is more important for Lowell to focus on. **[Read first pair and then ask – How would you like to allocate your ten points?]**

[_ Num]	Encourage business development by permitting commercial and industrial uses in more areas
	or
[_ Num]	Promote a stable local workforce by protecting attractive residential neighborhoods
[_ Num]	Attract business and investment through protection of Lowell's unique character
	or
[_ Num]	Promote construction through relaxed building restrictions and easier permitting
[_ Num]	Promote more business development in the downtown area
	or
[_ Num]	Promote more business development in the neighborhood business districts

4. What are some of the reasons you choose to operate your business in the city of Lowell?

[_5x40]

5. What are some of the barriers to owning or opening a business in Lowell?

[_5x40]

6. If you had only one choice, how could the City most help you operate your business in Lowell?

[_5x40]

Business Details

7. How many people does this business employ in Lowell?

[_5x40]

8. In what category would you classify your business? By "type of business" we mean broad categories such as: a restaurant, an accounting firm, a doctor's office, etc.

[_5x40]

9. What is your title? **[Interviewer: Listen and check most appropriate title]**

- () CEO/COO/Chairman/President
- () Owner/Partner/Principal
- () CFO/Controller/Treasurer
- () Vice President/Director
- () Manager
- () Professional (Consultant, Legal, Medical, Architect, etc.)
- () Supervisor
- () Other [_1x30]

10. How long has this business been located in Lowell?

[_5x40]

11. What area of Lowell are you located in? **[DO NOT READ LIST, SELECT ONE. If respondent does not know the area they are located in, get their street address or the names of the 2 streets that intersect closest to their business.]**

	<u>Neighborhood</u>
<input type="checkbox"/>	The Acre
<input type="checkbox"/>	Back Central
<input type="checkbox"/>	Belvidere
<input type="checkbox"/>	Centralville
<input type="checkbox"/>	Christian Hill
<input type="checkbox"/>	Downtown
<input type="checkbox"/>	The Highlands
<input type="checkbox"/>	Lower Belvidere
<input type="checkbox"/>	Lower Highlands
<input type="checkbox"/>	Middlesex Village
<input type="checkbox"/>	Pawtucketville
<input type="checkbox"/>	Riverside
<input type="checkbox"/>	Sacred Heart
<input type="checkbox"/>	South Lowell
<input type="checkbox"/>	Swede Village
<input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (Please specify) [_1x25]
<input type="checkbox"/>	OR: Street address [_1x25]

12. Which of the following statements best describe your living situation?

- ☐ I currently live in Lowell - **Go to Q13**
☐ I do not currently live in Lowell but I did at one time - **Go to Q13**
☐ I never lived in Lowell - **Thank you very much for your time.**

13. Would you consider yourself to be someone who grew up in Lowell?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

Name: [_1x30]

Company Name: [_1x30]

Thank you very much for your time. Your opinions are greatly appreciated.

Appendix C:
Verbatim Responses

Q4 -- Reasons to operate in Lowell

living in lowell FOR MANY YEARS HELPED MAKE THAT DECISION...EVEN IF I NO LONGER LIVE HERE

LIVED HERE ALL HIS LIFE

SAW IT AS A GOOD PLACE FOR THIS BUSINESS

Extremely affordable office space. Close to home

LIVE THERE FOR 33 YEARS

COMPETITION WAS LESS WHEN OPENED LOWERE SERVED POPULAYTION DIVERSITY OF POPULATION

LIVING THERE FOR A WHILE AVAILABLE SPACE

available space

RIGHT LOCATION

AFFILIATION W/UMASS LOWELL-DOWNTOWN SETTING FOR BUSINESSES-PRESENSE OF CONVERTED TEXTILE MILLS WERE A PLUS/STIMULATING ENVIRONMENT/AFFORDABLE OFFICE RENT

FOUND SIZE OF PROPERTY NEEDED

AVAILABILITY OF LOW COST OFFICE SPACE/IMMENITIES OFFERED OVER SUBURBS

REGIONAL BUSINESS-HAS CONTRACT IN THAT REGIONAL

LAST BUILDING THEY WERE IN WAS CONDEMNED AND MOVED HERE

GOOD DEAL TO BUY

lived here whole life not much competition in my trade

BUSINESS WAS ESTABLISHED AND WAS OFFERED A GOOD DEAL TO BUY IT

ITS WHERE I LIVE

Convenient

we're a glass co. and there is a lot of breakage in Lowell

There's a need in the Lowell Area. Available Staff in this area. Location

BEEN CONNECTED WITH LOWELL LONG TIME

LIVE HERE/GREW UP HERE

MORE PEOPLE

Available opportunity Future growth potential

Location

Live here

Help with community and Heavy population in the area

Commercial

NEW CHURCH/GOD LED THEM THERE

ONLY LARGE ENOUGH BUILDING IN AREA

QUALITY MARKET ITSELF FOR THEIR BUSINESS

LIVED IN LOWELL-OPENED IT HERE

GOOD PLACE TO BE/VARIETY OF PEOPLE

LARGE POPULATION BASE/COSMOPOLITAN/DIVERSE POPULATION

This home is an endowment for the elderly

Population

Good people in the area

LONGTERM COMMITMENT TO AREA

NO CHOICE

Family owned business

BEEN THERE FOR 50 YEARS/FACILITY SO BIG/WOULD MOVE IT OUT ON HIGHWAY

SKILLED EMPLOYEES/DEDICATED/PROUD OF COMMUNITY AND WHAT'S HAPPENING DOWNTOWN

EVERYBODY HAS TO EACH

NATIVE

VERY NICE AND A LOT OF PEOPLE NEED JOBS

DEMAND FOR HEALTHCARE SERVICES

ORIGINALLY BECAUSE OF CHEAPER RENT

FANTASTIC CITY/REPUTATION GETS A BAD RAP/UNIQUE CITY/GREAT LOCATION/ACCESS

POPULATION BASE

POPULATION BASE/LOCALE TO BOS AND NH/CENTRALIZED/AVAIL PEOPLE FOR EMPLOYMENT

Q5 -- Barriers to Owning/Operating Business in Lowell

competition

TRAFFIC CONGESTION IS BIG PARKING IMPROVEMENTS WOULD BE NICE

PARKING

Perception.

DONT KNOW

DONT KNOW

DONT KNOW

dont know

PARKING ISSUES

DISTANCE FROM AIRPORT/PARKING TO SOME EXTENT/

LACK OF SATISFACTORY LAND

PARKING/TRAFFIC

NONE

none

CANT THINK OF ANY

liability insuranc rents are high

PARKING IS AN ISSUE, ESPECIALLY NEAR RESIDENTAIL AREAS ITS HARD TO GET THE NEIGHBORS NOT TO PARK IN CUSTOMER SPOTS

DONT KNOW ANY RIGHT OFF HAND

Public Transportation

Don't know

Available space.

TRAFFIC CONGESTION/CRIME

NONE

PARKING

Getting permits

Traffic congestion

Permits and zoning

Difficulty getting started

Don't know

FINDING SPACE THAT WAS ACCESSIBLE AND CONVENIENT

DON'T KNOW

APPLYING FOR LICENCES/FINDING THE RIGHT LOCATION

NONE

NOT SURE

CITY HALL/POLITICS/RED TAP/DISREGARD FOR PROTESTANT CHURCH/TOTALLY IGNORED/DESIRE TO COOPERATE

Basically, non profit organizations don't get enough help with resources.

Perception of the city. Sounds unsafe and not friendly

Language

NONE

NO

none

ACCESS TO PATIENTS COMING IN OFF HIGHWAY/DIFFICULT TO GET THERE

PLOWING COULD BE BETTER AND CONGESTION WITH TRAFFIC AROUND BRIDGES

LOWER INCOME AREAS/VANDALISM/THEFT

LACK OF FOCUS ON RETAIL AND COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE DOWNTOWN AND SURROUNDING AREAS

GET NEGATIVE FROM PEOPLE/NOISE AFTER CERTAIN AREAS

NONE

GETTING THRU CITY FROM CONNECTOR/TRAFFIC CONGESTION

NONE

TAXES/PERCEPTION OF CRIME

VERY LIMITED ROOM TO GROW/NEGATIVE IMPACT TO LOWELL /CLOSER TIES WITH NEIGHBORING TOWNS-SHARE IMAGE

Q6 -- How could the City of Lowell most help you operate your business in Lowell?

water rates could be lower

HAVING THE CITY GO AROUND TO BUSINESSES LETTING THEM KNOW THE RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO THEM. SOME BUSINESS OWNERS DONT KNOW WHAT IS AVAILABLE TO THEM AS FAR AS MAYBE HELPING THEM PROMOTE THEIR BUSINESS BETTER

DONT KNOW

Give their sign business back to you

NO ANSWER

NOT SURE

MORE PARKING SOPACE

dont know

DOESNT EFFECT THIS OWNER

NOTHING

SELL HIM SOME LAND

DO NOT INCREASE RED TAPE TO GET PERMITS/WORK CLOSER WITH BUSINESSES/THINGS STARTING TO DETERIORATE LIKE CANALS

CREATING COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS BETWEEN HOSPITALS AND POLICE DEPTS

policed better

MORE POLICE PATROLLING

cuty is already doing a fine job to help my business

CANT THINK OF ANYTHING

DONT KNOW

More economy for the area

Don't know

Lower taxes.

SUPPORTING BUSINESS AS FAR AS TAX INCENTIVES

SMALL BUSINESS LOANS

PARKING

Better road conditions and Grants

Neighborhood Crime watch

Websites

Give more grants

Security

PLANS TO MAKE CREATIVE NEW USES FOR OLDER PLACES

MAKE LANDLORDS TAKE CARE OF PROPERTY

DON'T KNOW

BE FAIR ON TAXES

GET THEIR CONTRACT/SEND ALL CITY VEHICLES TO HIM

WELCOME US AS A PROTESTANT CHURCH INTO THE LOOP/TO BE SEEN AS A VIABLE TEAM PLAYER IN THE COMMUNITY SERVING YOUTH AND IMMIGRANTS

lowering water and sewage bills. Or giving a break on these 2 items

promoting the city as a friendly place to live

Encouraging young to work

BETTER SUPPORT OF MUNICIPALITIES/EX POLICE

MAKE SURE POLITICAL CLIMATE UNDER CONTROL

less taxes

NONE

REMAIN FRIENDLY TO BUSINESS

NONE

MAKE DOWNTOWN AREA A TOP PRIORITY

NOT MAKE A BIG DEAL ABOUT ODOR OR NOISE

EMPLOYEE RECRUITMENT

DON'T KNOW

VERY HAPPY WAY IT IS

REDUCE TAXES AND CONTROL CRIME

GET MORE INVOLVED TO JOB TRAINING SKILLS

Appendix D:

Detailed Tables